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## Awareness, Preference, Utilization, and Positioning Research for the Spallation Neutron Source and High Flux Isotope Reactor

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The Neutron Sciences Directorate at Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) conducted survey research during 2009–2010 to evaluate awareness of, preference for, and utilization of the Spallation Neutron Source (at ORNL), the High Flux Isotope Reactor (at ORNL), the Advanced Photon Source (APS at Argonne National Laboratory), and the National Synchrotron Light Source (NSLS at Brookhaven National Laboratory). We were interested in gaining an understanding of the (1) level of understanding regarding benefits that neutron scattering might afford members of these scientific communities, (2) awareness levels among those in the scientific communities regarding what ORNL has to offer relative to the two neutron sources, and (3) whether there were any perceptions negatively impacting utilization of each facility. The research employed a mix of qualitative methods and an on-line survey. Meetings were held with key stakeholders from ORNL as well as members of the ORNL communications team and leadership from APS and NSLS. One-on-one interviews, traditional focus groups (face to face) and on-line focus groups with users were held to gain insights into the user experience from awareness of a facility and submitting a proposal through conducting the experiment at a national laboratory or other world-class facility. An on-line survey was then used to develop quantitative information. The survey consisted of 16 questions and seven demographic categorizations, nine open-ended queries, and 153 pre-coded variables; the survey took an average time of 18 minutes to complete. The survey will provide a way to quantify difference—if any—between scientists based on key demographics, age, area of science, length of time in field, years experience with light/neutron sources, etc.

The results of the survey indicated that the awareness of SNS or HFIR is relatively low outside the ORNL user group. Users of APS and NSLS tended to first become aware of the facilities through an academic advisor whereas users of SNS and HFIR first become aware through a colleague. When users were asked about their expectations of a facility, the following five ranked the highest for all facilities: (1) sample environment, (2) reliability of the beam, (3) intuitive software, (4) easy access, and (5) 24/7 notification of beamline status. Additional results will be available on the poster including users preferences for educational opportunities, methods of communication with the facility's user office and scientists, obtaining information from written and electronic sources, and beliefs about proposal submissions.